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THE FANTASTIC
FOUR
1961-1991

LEE
&
WILLIAMS

STAN LEE PROUDLY PRESENTS
CHRIS CLAREMONT'S FINAL ISSUE OF THE X-MEN:

Fallout!

By
CHRIS
CLAREMONT
and JIM
LEE

OFFICIALLY SPEAKING,
FIFTY MILES HIGH IS
WHERE SPACE BEGINS.

THE BOUNDARY ISN'T THAT PRECISE, OF
COURSE; ON A MOLECULAR LEVEL, EARTH'S
ATMOSPHERE GOES ON FOR QUITE A WAYS.
FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES THOUGH,
THIS IS CONSIDERED TO BE AS HIGH AS
HUMAN BEINGS CAN FLY IN ANYTHING
LESS THAN A ROCKET.

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A RESTRICTION THAT EVIDENTLY DOES NOT APPLY TO THE UNCANNY X-MEN.

I MAY HATE APOCALYPSE FOR GRAFTING THESE BIONIC WINGS IN PLACE OF THE REAL ONES I WAS BORN WITH...

... BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT, STORM, THEY ARE A PIECE OF WORK.

WITHOUT THEM, I COULD NEVER SOAR SO HIGH, EVEN WITH YOUR WINDS TO HELP.



I AM AFRAID, MY FRIEND, THIS MAY BE AS FAR AS WE GO.

STORM'S REACHED HER LIMIT.

SHE'S FOCUSED HER POWER TO ITS UTMOST, BUT THE AIR IS TOO THIN AT THIS ALTITUDE TO SUSTAIN EVEN A GHOST OF A WIND.

HER BEST IS PLENTY GOOD ENOUGH, RED. SHE'S PULLED THIS GLIDER A FAIR PIECE HIGHER THAN WE EXPECTED.

SHOULD MAKE YOUR JOB THAT MUCH EASIER.

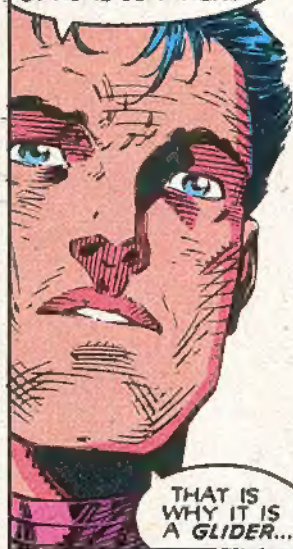
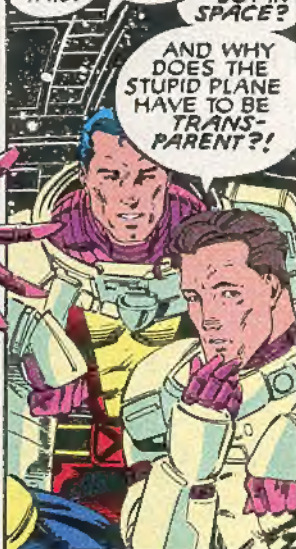


I HATE THIS, I REALLY HATE THIS.

I MEAN, FLYING'S BAD ENOUGH -- BUT IN SPACE? SHTO?

AND WHY DOES THE STUPID PLANE HAVE TO BE TRANS-PARENT?!

FORGE SAID IT WAS TO MAKE US FUNCTIONALLY INVISIBLE, BOTH TO ELECTRONIC AND OPTICAL SCANNERS.



THAT IS WHY IT IS A GLIDER...

YEAH, I KNOW -- WITH NO METAL ELEMENTS, SUCH AS ENGINES, FOR MAGNETO TO DETECT.

YOU'D BEST PRAY THE INDIAN'S RIGHT, ICEMAN ME BOYO, OR WE'RE AS GOOD AS DEAD.



WE'VE A PRECIOUS THIN CHANCE AS IT IS O' SAVIN' THE DAY...

WHAT WITH OUR CAPTURED TEAM-MATES ANNOUNCIN' THEY'VE SWITCHED SIDES AN' JOINED UP WITH THE X-MEN'S ARCH-ENEMY.

"NOT T' MENTION
THE GREAT
POWERS DOWN
BELOW..."

"...BOUND-AN'-
DETERMINED TO
TAKE A MESS
AN' TURN IT
INTO A ROYAL
CATASTROPHE.

"NOT SIMPLY
FOR US
MUTANTS,
BUT F'R THE
WHOLE SAD,
SORRY
PLANET!"

YOU CAN'T DO
THIS! SUPPOSE
YOU DON'T
DESTROY
ASTEROID M,
BUT SIMPLY
KNOCK IT OUT
OF ORBIT?

ANYONE WANNA
IMAGINE THE DAMAGE
THAT HUNK O' ROCK'LL
DO WHEN IT HITS
THE GROUND?

THE FIRING
TRAJECTORY,
COLONEL FURY,
HAS BEEN CALCULATED
TO BLAST THE TARGET AWAY
FROM EARTH
AND INTO DEEP
SPACE.

AN' IF
THEY'RE
WRONG?

YOU
WOULD
RATHER
WE DO
NOTHING,
COLONEL?

I DON'T SEE
THE SENSE O'
STAMPEDIN' INTO
A COURSE OF
ACTION WE MAY
ALL REGRET.

YOU'RE A
SOLDIER,
FURY. I'D'VE
THOUGHT
YOU, OF ALL
PEOPLE,
WOULD
UNDER-
STAND.

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN,
CHIEF
ANDER-
SON?

THIS IS A WAR,
AMBASSADOR
KAMANEV!

AND WE EITHER
WIN IT OUTRIGHT,
OR YIELD OUR-
SELVES-- AND ALL
HUMANITY-- UP TO
MAGNETO AS
VIRTUAL SLAVES!
ALLOWING HIM TO
LORD IT OVER US
LIKE SOME
ANCIENT GOD ON
MOUNT OLYMPUS.

YES, PEOPLE WILL
SUFFER AND PEOPLE
MAY WELL DIE-- AS MY
COUNTRYMEN HERE IN
GENOSHA HAVE
SUFFERED AND DIED AT
THE HANDS OF THAT
MUTANT MADMAN AND
HIS PET TERRORISTS--
BUT SOMETIMES THAT'S
THE PRICE DEMANDED
OF SURVIVAL.

AND
FREEDOM!

MY
GOVERNMENT'S
POSITION,
PRECISELY.

AND YOURS AS
WELL, COLONEL FURY.

IN THIS,
MOSCOW AND
WASHINGTON
ARE IN FULL
AGREE-
MENT.

NO
MATTER
THE
COST?

OUR HEADS OF
STATE ARE THE
MAKERS OF POLICY,
DR. COOPER.

WE ARE MERELY ITS
EXECUTORS. AND OUR
ORDERS ARE PLAIN.

DIRECTLY THE PLASMA
CANNON ACHIEVES ITS
FIRING COORDINATES,
ASTEROID M-- AND
ALL ABOARD--

--ARE TO BE
DESTROYED.

THEY'RE
SERIOUS.

THEY'RE
SCARED,
MS. GREY.

IN WAYS WE CAN'T
EVEN CONCEIVE OF,
BECAUSE-- EVEN THOUGH
WE X-MEN ARE THE GOOD
GUYS-- WE'RE THE ONES
THEY'RE SCARED OF.

THE FUTURE THEY SEE, JEAN, IS
ONE WHERE THEY'RE DESTINED TO
BE PERPETUAL VICTIMS, INNOCENTS
CAUGHT BETWEEN BEINGS WHOSE
POWERS THEY BARELY COMPREHEND
AND HAVEN'T A HOPE OF MATCHING.
WHERE THEY'LL ALWAYS BE AT
OUR MERCY.

MUTANTS,
SUPER-
BEINGS,
GODS, ALIENS.

A GUY WHO STICKS TO WALLS AT
ONE EXTREME, A CREATURE WHO
EATS PLANETS AT THE OTHER; EACH
ONE THAT COMES INTO BEING,
THEY FEEL, DIMINISHES THE
REST OF HUMANITY, ORDINARY
HOMO SAPIENS, THAT LITTLE
BIT MORE.

THEY LOOK AROUND,
THEY SEE A WORLD THAT'S
SLIPPING MORE AND MORE
OUT OF THEIR CONTROL.

THIS WAY, THEY
DEMONSTRATE THEY
MEAN BUSINESS. THEY
MAY NEVER BE ABLE TO PUT
THE GENETIC GENIE BACK IN
ITS BOTTLE, BUT THEY'RE
STILL DETERMINED TO
BE ITS MASTER.

AND
THEREBY
PROVE
MAGNETO
RIGHT.

HOW'S
YOUR
PSILINK
WITH THE
PROF? YOU
SURE IT
CAN'T BE
TAGGED?

FORGE,
I'VE BEEN
CHARLES
XAVIER'S
STUDENT
SINCE I WAS
A CHILD.

WE'RE
TELE-
PATHICALLY
BONDED ON
LEVELS NO
ONE CAN
TOUCH.

THE PROFES-
SOR IS WELL.
BUT THE
SITUATION IS
AS BAD AS WE
FEARED.

...THEY WILL
FIGHT US AS
TENACIOUSLY
AND COU-
RAGEOUSLY
AS THEY
WOULD THEIR
DEADLIEST
FOES.

CYCLOPS
AND HIS
TEAM...

... HAVE
WHOLEHEARTEDLY
EMBRACED MAG-
NETO'S CAUSE.
AND IF WE DO
NOT FOLLOW
THEIR LEAD...

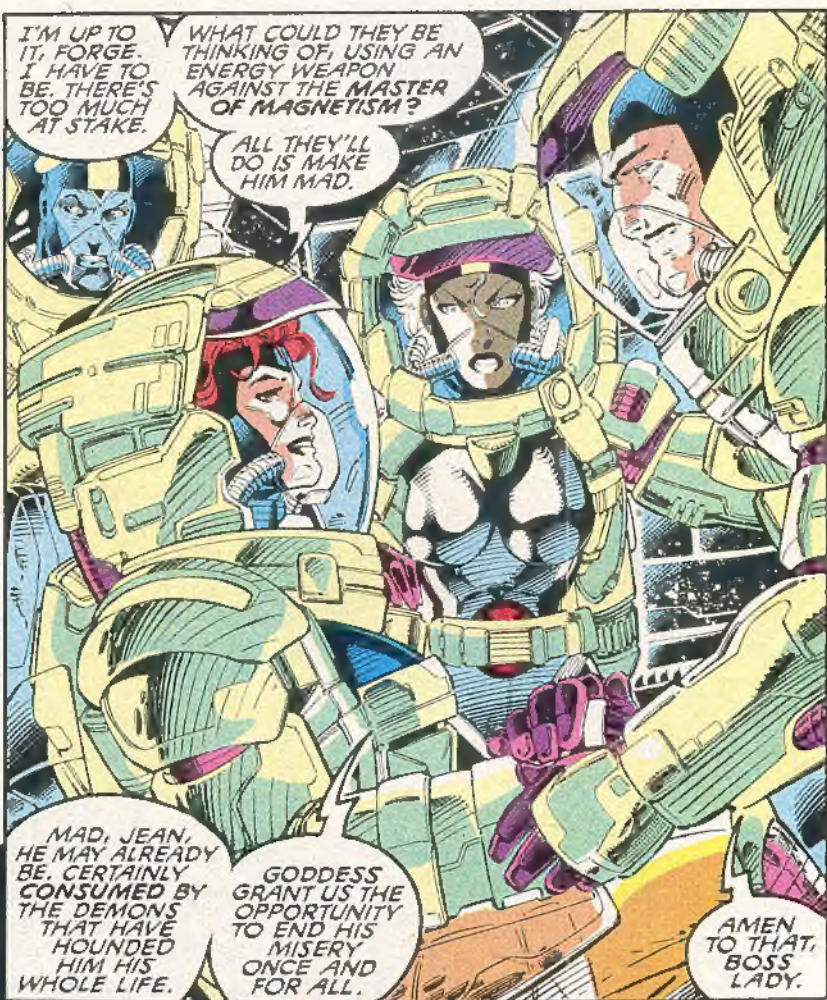


BE A MOOT POINT ONCE THAT PLASMA CANNON STARTS TAKING POT-SHOTS.

STORM AND ARCH-ANGEL ARE THROUGH THE AIRLOCK.

EVERYBODY SEAL YOUR HELMETS AND CHARGE YOUR PRESSURE SUITS.

COMIN' UP ON SHOWTIME, RED.



I'M UP TO IT, FORGE. I HAVE TO BE. THERE'S TOO MUCH AT STAKE.

WHAT COULD THEY BE THINKING OF, USING AN ENERGY WEAPON AGAINST THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM?

ALL THEY'LL DO IS MAKE HIM MAD.

MAD, JEAN, HE MAY ALREADY BE. CERTAINLY CONSUMED BY THE DEMONS THAT HAVE HOUNDED HIM HIS WHOLE LIFE.

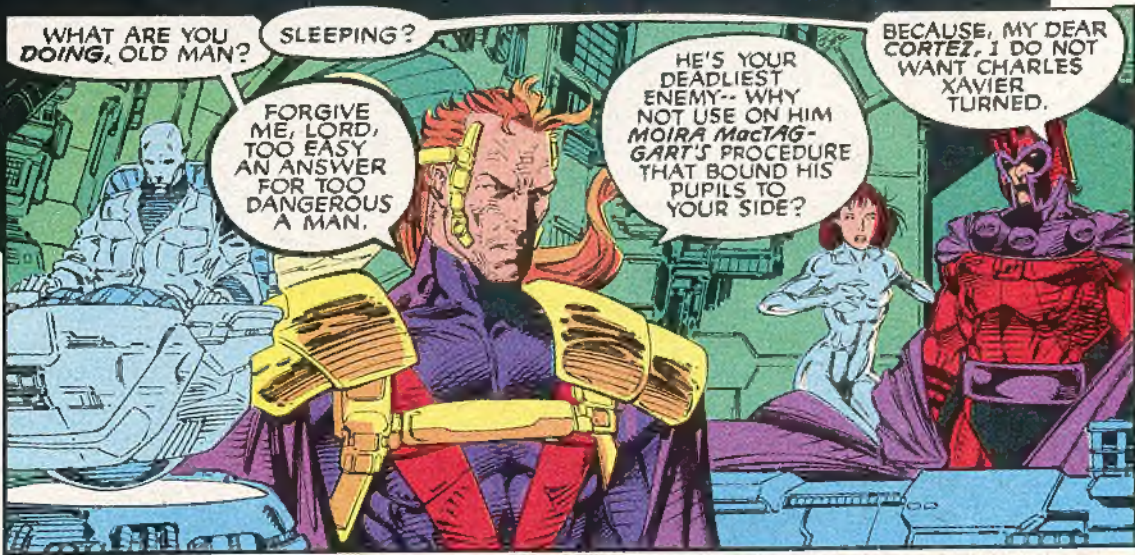
GODDESS GRANT US THE OPPORTUNITY TO END HIS MISERY ONCE AND FOR ALL.

AMEN TO THAT, BOSS LADY.



MEANWHILE, EASILY AS FAR ABOVE THE X-MEN'S HEADS...

... AS THEY ARE ABOVE THE SLEEPING, NIGHT-SHROUDED WORLD BELOW...



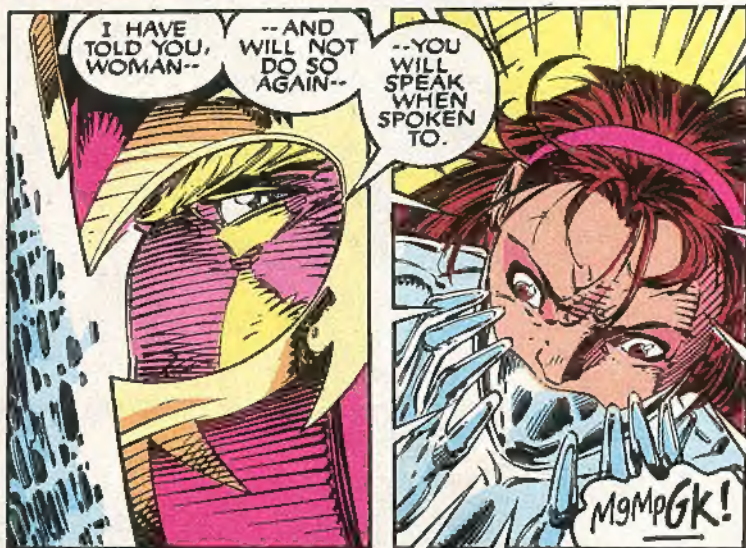
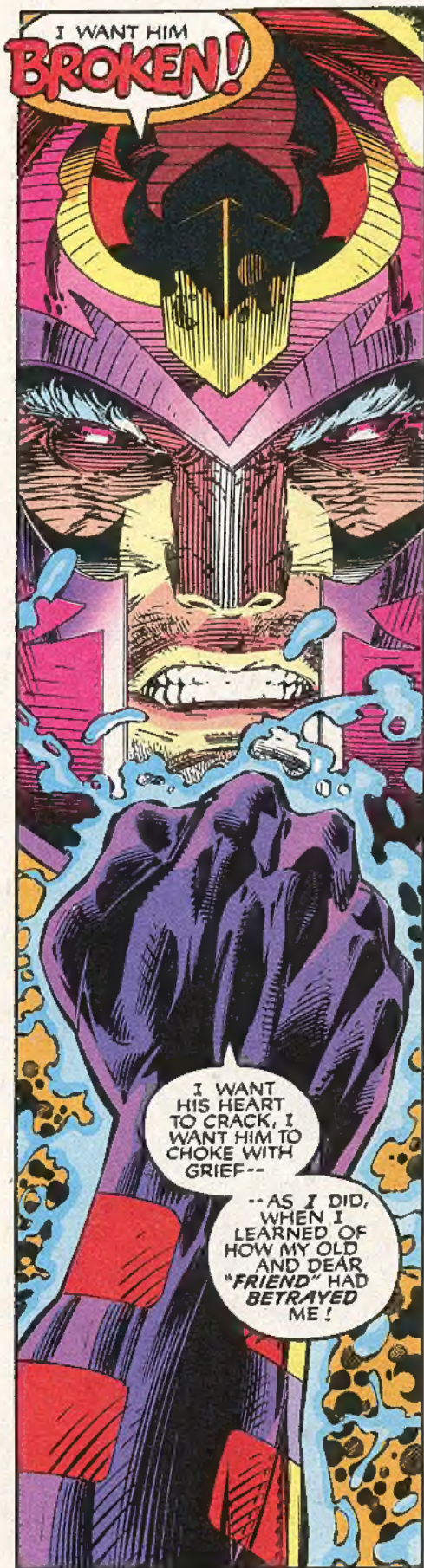
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, OLD MAN?

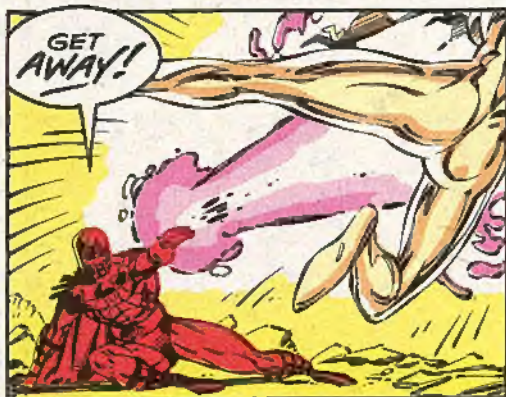
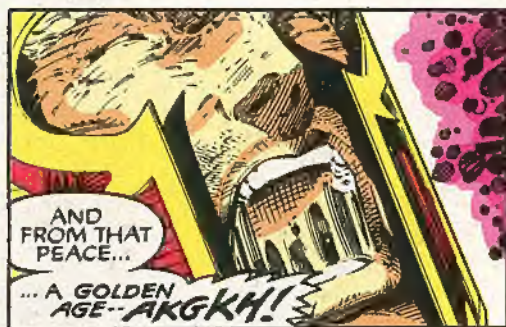
SLEEPING?

FORGIVE ME, LORD, TOO EASY AN ANSWER FOR TOO DANGEROUS A MAN.

HE'S YOUR DEADLIEST ENEMY-- WHY NOT USE ON HIM MOIRA MacTAGGART'S PROCEDURE THAT BOUND HIS PUPILS TO YOUR SIDE?

BECAUSE, MY DEAR CORTEZ, I DO NOT WANT CHARLES XAVIER TURNED.



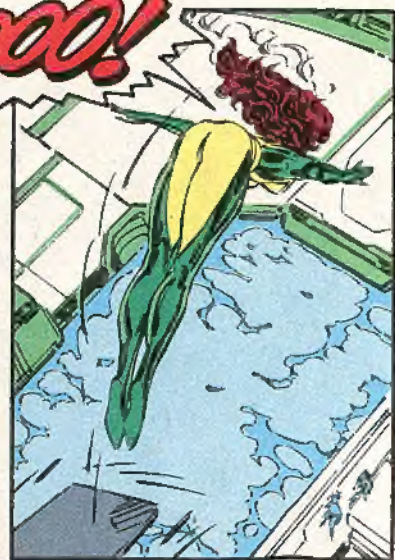


AT ROUGHLY THAT MOMENT, ELSEWHERE IN THE HUGE ASTEROID...

...CYCLOPS'S TEAM OF X-MEN ARE ASSUMING THEIR NEW ROLES AS MAGNETO'S LATEST ACOLYTES AS THOUGH BORN TO THEM.

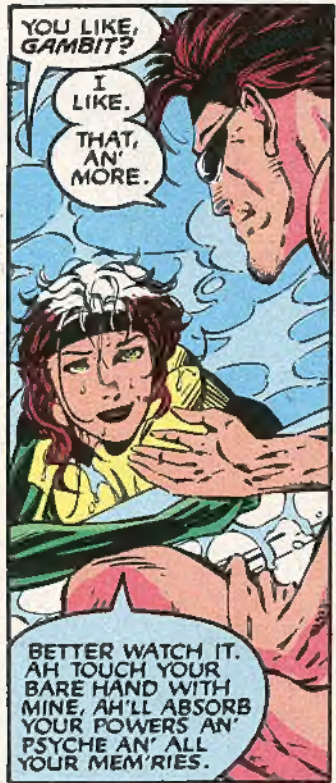
WAH-

HOOOO!



NOT TOO SHABBY, THERE.

FINEST-KIND, OLYMPIC CLASS CANNONBALL.



YOU LIKE, GAMBIT?

I LIKE, THAT, AN' MORE.

BETTER WATCH IT. AH TOUCH YOUR BARE HAND WITH MINE, AH'LL ABSORB YOUR POWERS AN' PSYCHE AN' ALL YOUR MEM'RIES.



MAYBE.

MAYBE NOT.

WAN' TAKE THE RISK, LI'L RIVER RAT?

I...
I...



AH'M SORRY, GAMBIT, AH-- WELL NOW, AIN'T THAT A SIGHT!

FIRST TIME-- EVER-- AH B' LIEVE...

...AH'VE SEEN THAT CAJUN CHARMER THROWN OFF-BALANCE.



THINK OF IT AS
THE ULTIMATE
GRAPPLING HOOK

A
STRAND
OF
ENERGY
CAST
ACROSS
THE
GULF OF
MILES...

...BUT THEN HOLD FAST AS
JEAN, USING ONLY THE
POWER OF HER THOUGHTS
AND HER INNATE
STRENGTH OF WILL...

...HAULS
THE GLIDER
UPWARDS,
HAND OVER
MENTAL
HAND...

KNOWING THAT
THE SLIGHTEST SLIP,
THE MOST MOMEN-
TARY WEAKNESS,
WILL DOOM THEM ALL.

... THAT
MUST
NOT ONLY
LATCH ONTO
ASTEROID M
AS IT
SWINGS
PAST ALONG
ITS ORBITAL
TRACK...

COMPANY
COMIN', MOIRA?

WOLVERINE!

Oh, NO
NO!
NO!

TRANSPARENT
PLANE. STORM'S
IDEA. FORGE'S
DOING, I'LL BET.

VERY
SNEAKY
I LIKE
THAT

COMIN' TO THE
RESCUE, ARE
THEY?

CAN'T
SAY THAT'S
MUCH OF A
SURPRISE.

SNIKT!

BETTER MAKE SURE WE
GIVE 'EM THE WELCOME
THEY DESERVE.

BY
HEAVEN...

IF ONLY I
COULD ADD
MY PSYCHIC
STRENGTH
TO MINE

BUT
MAGNETO'S
INHIBITORS
PREVENT MY
UTILIZING MY
OWN PSYCHIC
POWERS

"IN THIS CASE, MY
DEAR CHILD CAN
DEPEND ON NONE
BUT HERSELF"

THERE'S
SOMETHIN'
OUT THERE!

SO
FAINT
THOUGH
I CAN
BARELY
SEE IT.

BE READY WITH THE ANCHORS, FORGE...

...TO SECURE US IN PLACE THE INSTANT WE MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SURFACE.

BUT WHAT ABOUT JEAN?

GOOD AS DONE, STORM

I'M FINE, THANK YOU.

UTTERLY EXHAUSTED, BUT...

...FINE.

TO TELL THE TRUTH, I DIDN'T THINK I HAD SUCH A CAPABILITY IN ME.

TO TELL THE TRUTH, DEAR FRIEND ..

I NEVER DOUBTED IT.

REST EASY, LASS, YER JOB'S DONE

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, BANSHEE.

I MAY BE BEAT BUT I'M A LONG WAY FROM BEATEN

THE NEXT STEP IS YOURS, TOVAR-SCH ICEMAN.

STAY BEHIND ME YOU GUYS

GOOD AS YOUR PRESSURE SUITS ARE, I'M GENERATING A FREEZE EFFECT OF NEAR ABSOLUTE-ZERO.

WOULDN'T DO AT ALL TO GET IN THE WAY

OVER TO YOU, BIG GUY GO TO TOWN!

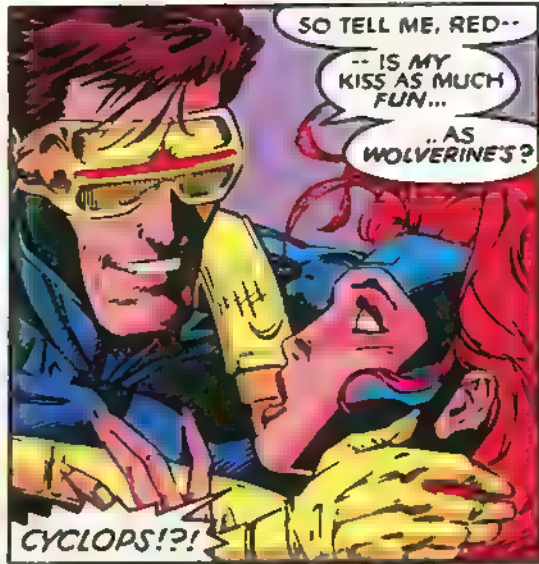
YOUR SOLID ARMOR BODY SHOULD PROTECT YOU FROM THE COLD ANYONE ELSE, THEY'D FREEZE TO THE METAL WITH A TOUCH

THE COLD ALSO SHOULD HAVE RENDERED THE MOLECULAR STRUCTURE OF THE WALL BRITTLE AS CLAY

ONE GOOD PUNCH SHOULD DO THE TRICK

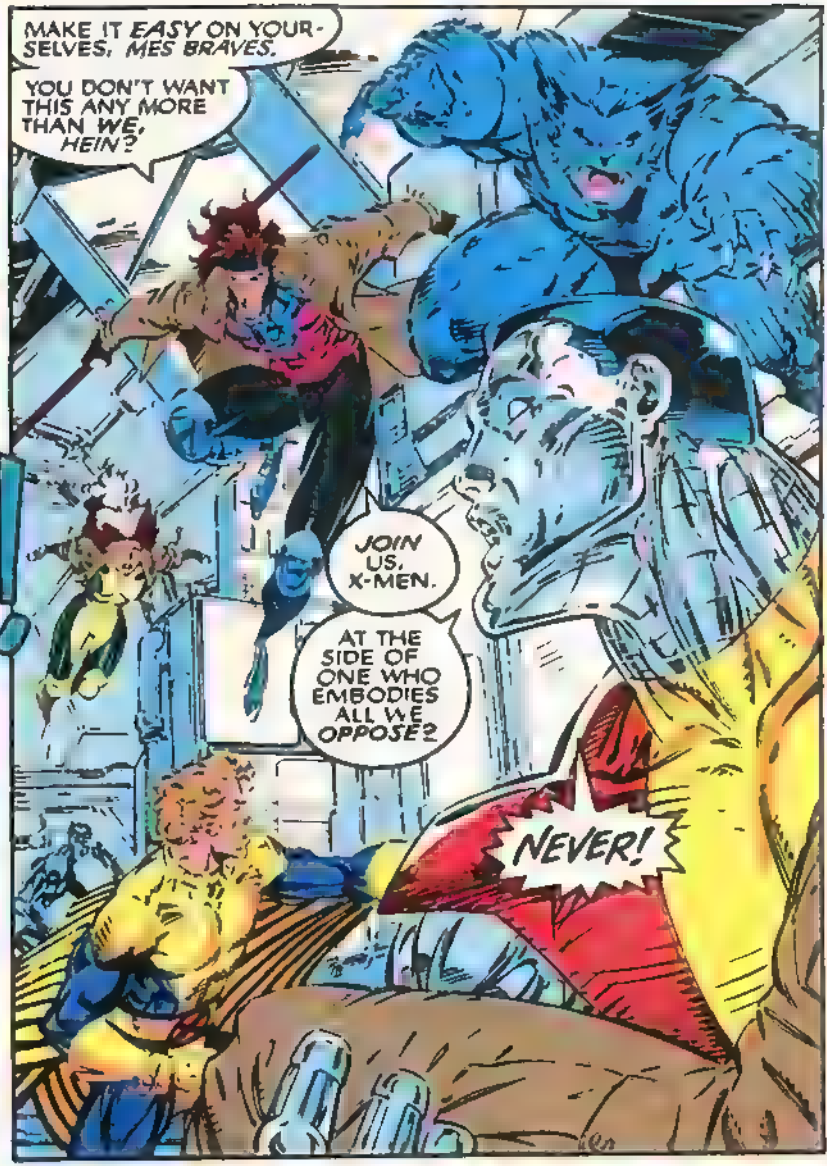
MY SPECIALTY.

AND MY PLEASURE.





'CAUSE IT MAY WELL BE YOUR LAST!



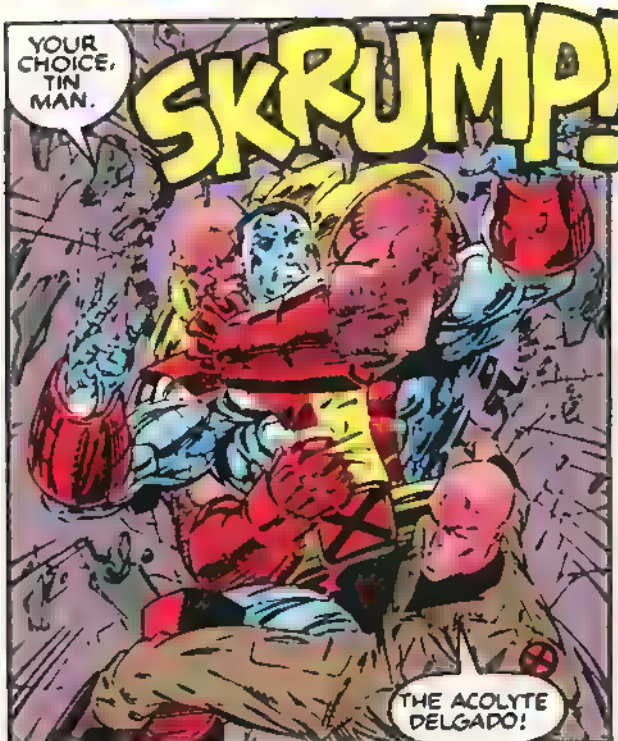
MAKE IT EASY ON YOURSELVES, MES BRAVES.

YOU DON'T WANT THIS ANY MORE THAN WE, HEIN?

JOIN US, X-MEN.

AT THE SIDE OF ONE WHO EMBODIES ALL WE OPPOSE?

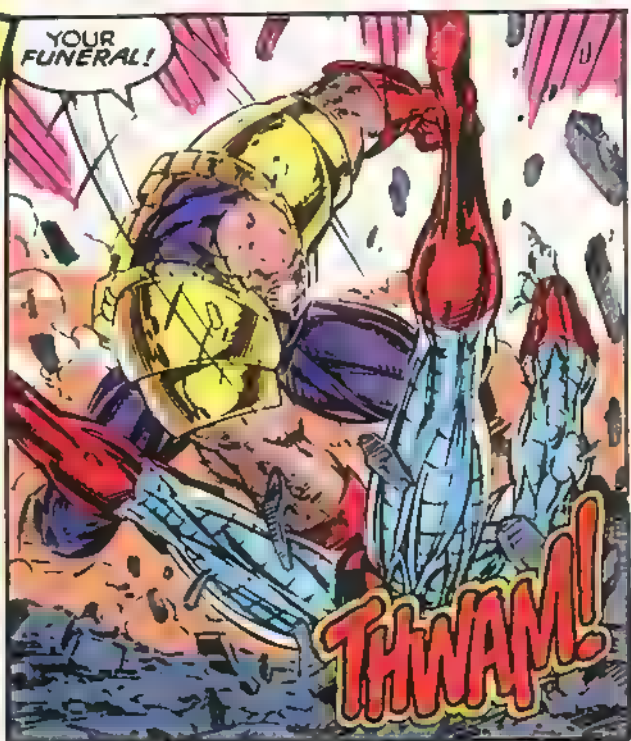
NEVER!



YOUR CHOICE, TIN MAN.

SKRUMP!

THE ACOLYTE DELGADO!



YOUR FUNERAL!

THWAM!

IF I MAY BE SO BOLD...

...THAT'S HARDLY THE WAY TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE...

...MUCH LESS MAKE FRIENDS.

KWUDD!

REVEALING YOUR TRUE COLORS, M'SIEU BETE?

NO MATTER, WHEN THIS IS FINISHED...

...WE'LL MAKE SURE YOU SEE THE LIGHT.

KRAK!

YOUR WAY OR NOTHING, THAT THE TICKET, GAMBIT?

CAST ASIDE THE PAST LIKE A SNAKE SHEDDING ITS SKIN, AS THOUGH IT WAS NOTHING?

BLAST THE MAN! HOW CAN HE BE BLOCKING MY EVERY SHOT?!

BLAZES, HE'S DEFLECTING THEM BACK AT ME.

SHIELD'S STOPPING MOST--

AKGH!

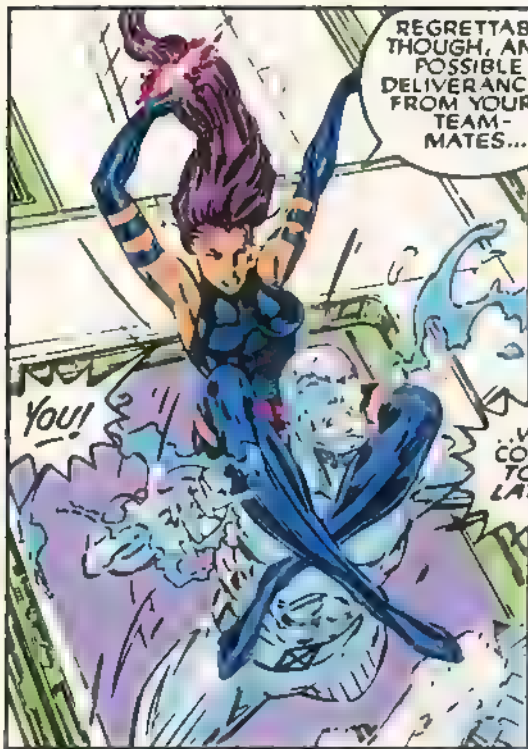
LAST ONE CLIPPED MY PROSTHETIC LEG. ONLY A SURFACE STRIKE, THOUGH, NO MAJOR DAMAGE.

CAJUN'S NAILED, FORGE.

STORM'S GOING AFTER ROGUE. ANYONE ELSE DOWN HERE NEED A HAND?

BWOP!

ONLY ONE PERSON AT THE MOMENT, ICEMAN



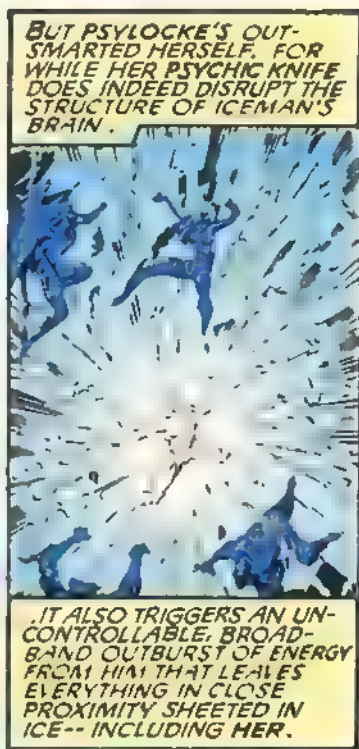
REGRETTABLY, THOUGH, ANY POSSIBLE DELIVERANCE FROM YOUR TEAM-MATES...

You!

...WILL COME TOO LATE!

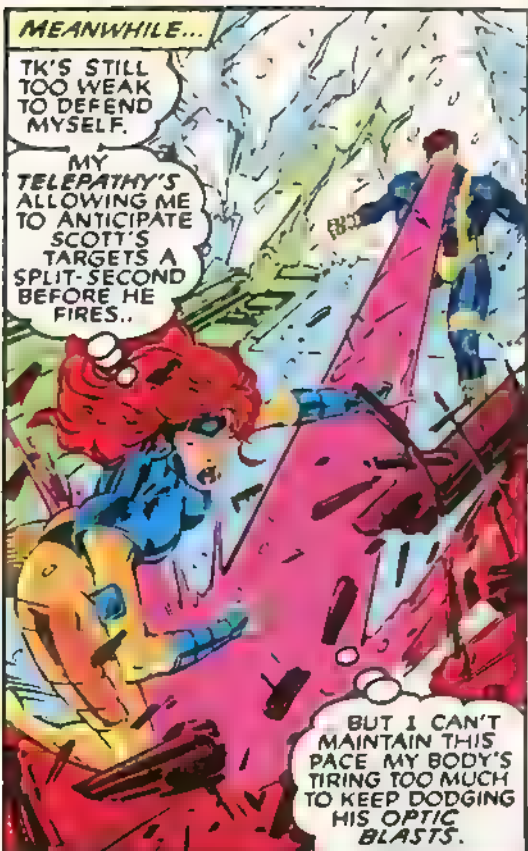


Wugh!



BUT PSYLOCKE'S OUT-SMARTED HERSELF, FOR WHILE HER PSYCHIC KNIFE DOES INDEED DISRUPT THE STRUCTURE OF ICEMAN'S BRAIN.

IT ALSO TRIGGERS AN UNCONTROLLABLE, BROAD-BAND OUTBURST OF ENERGY FROM HIM THAT LEAVES EVERYTHING IN CLOSE PROXIMITY SHEETED IN ICE-- INCLUDING HER.



MEANWHILE...

TK'S STILL TOO WEAK TO DEFEND MYSELF.

MY TELEPATHY'S ALLOWING ME TO ANTICIPATE SCOTT'S TARGETS A SPLIT-SECOND BEFORE HE FIRES..

BUT I CAN'T MAINTAIN THIS PACE. MY BODY'S TIRING TOO MUCH TO KEEP DODGING HIS OPTIC BLASTS.



CYCLOPS-- ALL OF YOU--

..STOP!

ROGUE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

HAVE YOU BETRAYED THE CAUSE, TOO?!!

ZAPK!

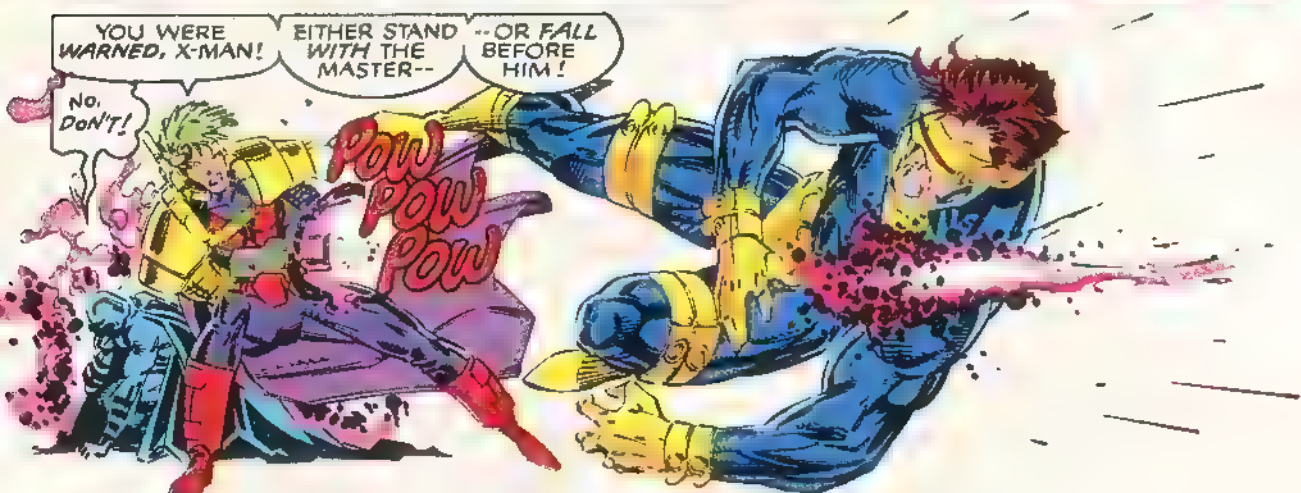
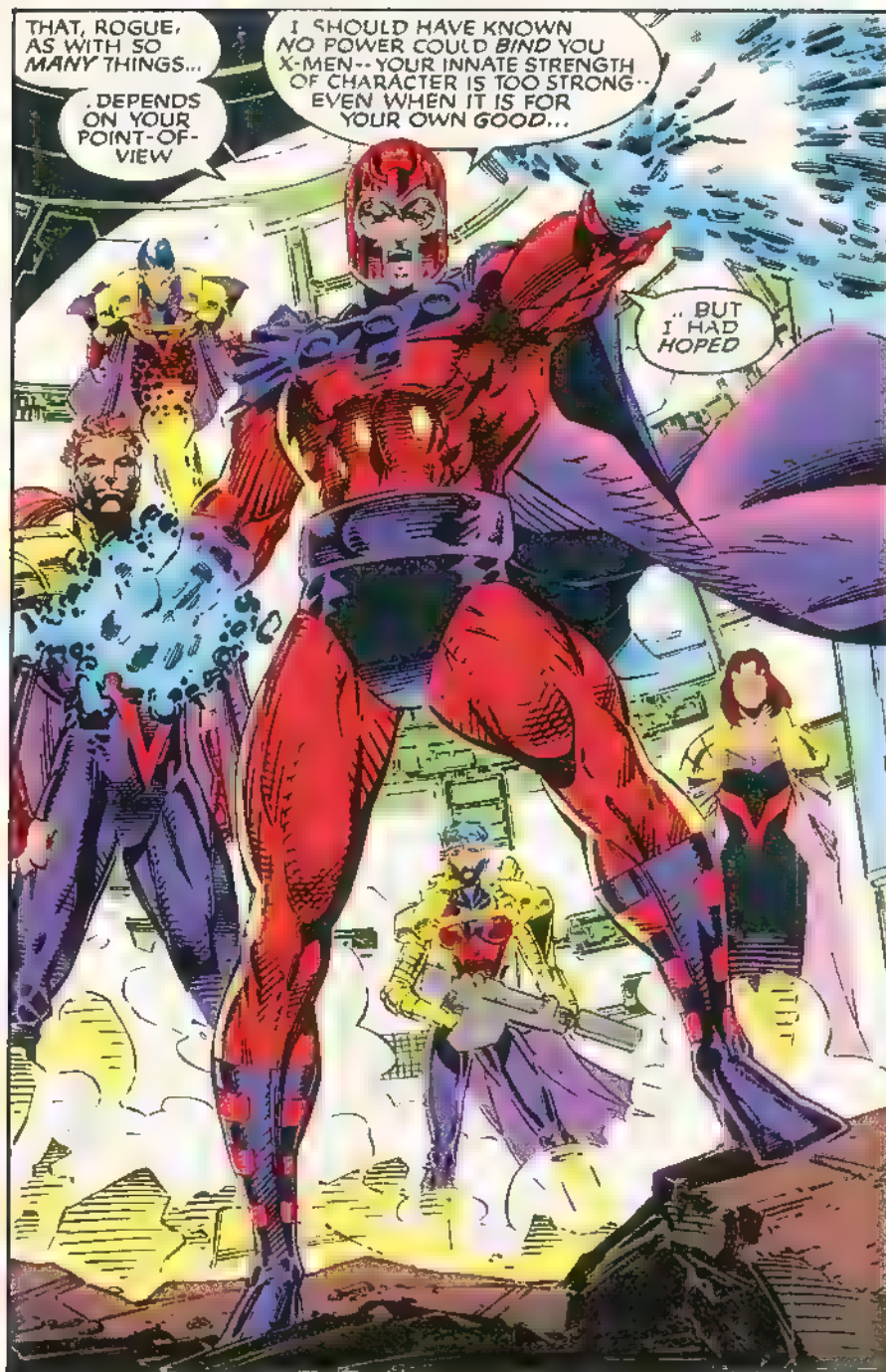


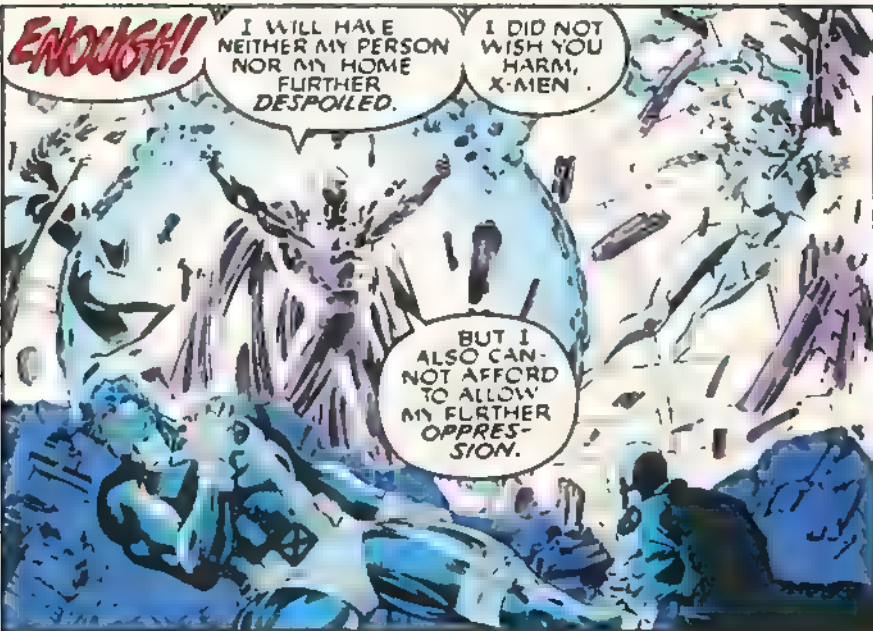
WAIT--
--THIS IS INSANE--
--WHAT AM I DOING?!

AIN'T ALT'GETHER SURE MYSELF.

'CEPT WE'RE SIDIN' WITH OUR DEADLIEST FOES AGAINST OUR NEAREST AN' DEAREST..

AN' THAT AIN'T NATURAL!





ENOUGH!

I WILL HAVE
NEITHER MY PERSON
NOR MY HOME
FURTHER
DESPOILED.

I DID NOT
WISH YOU
HARM,
X-MEN.

BUT I
ALSO CAN-
NOT AFFORD
TO ALLOW
MY FURTHER
OPPRES-
SION.



CAN'T YOU SEE? AFTER
ALL THESE YEARS,
STILL DO YOU NOT
UNDERSTAND?!

WHEN ALL IS
SAID AND
DONE, YOUR
DREAM,
MAGNETO, CAN-
NOT ENDURE...

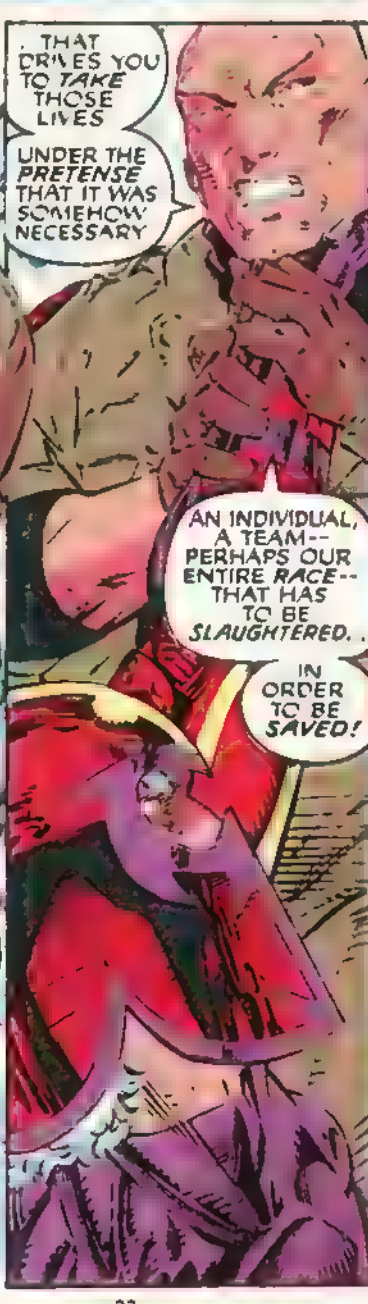
BECAUSE
IT WILL FOR-
EVER BE
TAINTED...



BY THE BLOOD OF
THOSE YOU'VE SACRIFICED
ALONG THE WAY!

YOU
DARE
CONDEMN ME,
XAVIER!

AFTER
WHAT
YOU'VE
DONE!



THAT
DRIVES YOU
TO TAKE
THOSE
LIVES

UNDER THE
PRETENSE
THAT IT WAS
SOMEHOW
NECESSARY

AN INDIVIDUAL,
A TEAM--
PERHAPS OUR
ENTIRE RACE--
THAT HAS
TO BE
SLAUGHTERED.

IN
ORDER
TO BE
SAVED!

AND
POISONED
AS WELL
BY THE
RAGE...



IS THAT
WHAT YOU
WANT?!

MERCIFUL
GLORY, HE'S--
DISCORPORAT-
ING?!?

ARRGH!



GAME'S OVER, BUB

TIME T' CALL IT QUILTS.

GO AHEAD THEN, WOLVERINE MAKE YOUR DAY PLAY THE ROLE YOU SEEM BORN TO...

...THAT OF EXECUTIONER.

I... CANNOT STOP YOU



I'M TEMPTED. BUT WE'RE HEROES. EVEN WHEN IT HURTS, WE GOTTA STAND FOR SOMETHING.

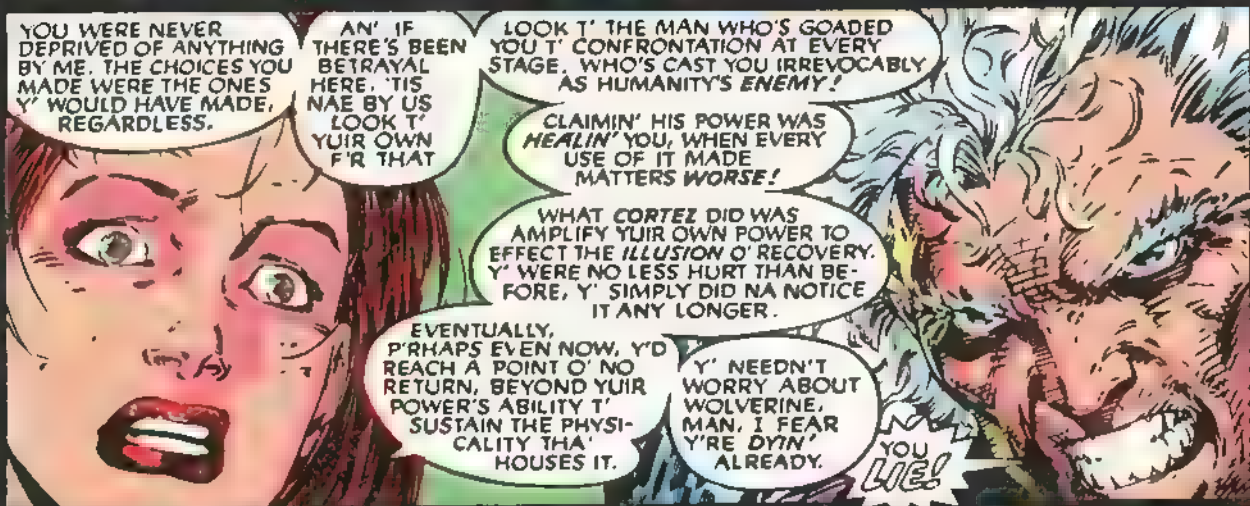
AN' I DRAW THE LINE AT MURDER.

MY PROCESS WAS A FAILURE, MAGNETO-- EFFECTIVE ONLY SO LONG AS THE SUBJECT NEVER USED THEIR MUTANT POWER.

THE STRUCTURES OF MIND AND BODY HAVE T' BE ALIGNED A CERTAIN, SPECIFIC WAY FOR THOSE POWERS T' OPERATE, IN HARMONY SO T' SPEAK W/ YUIR ESSENTIAL CHARACTER.

THAT'S WHY YOU ALL HAVE SUCH INDOMITABLE WILLS.

NO MATTER HOW DEEPLY YE'RE "BRAIN-WASHED," EACH USE O' YUIR POWER REVERTS YOU TO YUIR NATURAL, "DEFAULT" STATE.



YOU WERE NEVER DEPRIVED OF ANYTHING BY ME. THE CHOICES YOU MADE WERE THE ONES Y' WOULD HAVE MADE, REGARDLESS.

AN' IF THERE'S BEEN BETRAYAL HERE, 'TIS NAE BY US LOOK T' YUIR OWN F'R THAT

LOOK T' THE MAN WHO'S GOADED YOU T' CONFRONTATION AT EVERY STAGE. WHO'S CAST YOU IRREVOCABLY AS HUMANITY'S ENEMY?

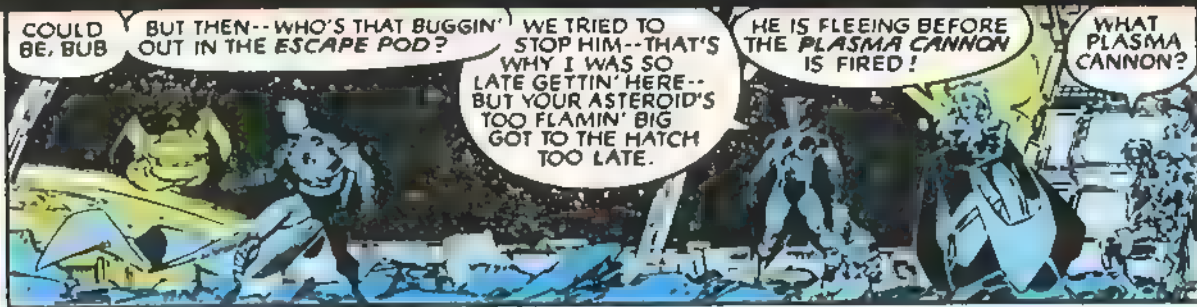
CLAIMIN' HIS POWER WAS HEALIN' YOU, WHEN EVERY USE OF IT MADE MATTERS WORSE!

WHAT CORTEZ DID WAS AMPLIFY YUIR OWN POWER TO EFFECT THE ILLUSION O' RECOVERY. Y' WERE NO LESS HURT THAN BEFORE, Y' SIMPLY DID NA NOTICE IT ANY LONGER.

EVENITUALLY, P'Rhaps EVEN NOW, Y'D REACH A POINT O' NO RETURN, BEYOND YUIR POWER'S ABILITY T' SUSTAIN THE PHYSICALITY THA' HOUSES IT.

Y' NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT WOLVERINE, MAN. I FEAR Y'RE DYIN' ALREADY.

YOU LIE!



COULD BE, BUB

BUT THEN-- WHO'S THAT BUGGIN' OUT IN THE ESCAPE POD?

WE TRIED TO STOP HIM-- THAT'S WHY I WAS SO LATE GETTIN' HERE-- BUT YOUR ASTEROID'S TOO FLAMIN' BIG GOT TO THE HATCH TOO LATE.

HE IS FLEEING BEFORE THE PLASMA CANNON IS FIRED!

WHAT PLASMA CANNON?

THE CANNON, CHUMPS, THAT'S GOING TO BLAST YOU OUT OF SPACE.

AND, SADLY, LORD MAGNETO, YOU TOO MUST PAY THE PRICE

BUT YOU WILL LIVE ON IN THE MINDS OF MEN LIKE ME--

--TO INFLAME AND INSPIRE US--

--TO FOLLOW OUR RIGHTEOUS CAUSE--

--THAT OUR PEOPLE MAY NOT FADE FROM THE EARTH!

THUS-- I MUST PUSH THE PROCESS ALONG!

MISSION CONTROL-- EMERGENCY-- SOME OUTSIDE INFLUENCE HAS TAKEN OVER OUR CONTROL CIRCUITS!

THE CANNON IS **FIRING!**

WITH, AS PREDICTED, AS FEARED, DEVASTATING RESULTS.

THE BEAM BURNS THROUGH SOLID ROCK AS THOUGH THE ASTEROID HAD NO MORE SUBSTANCE THAN A CLOUD.

AND BECAUSE ITS INTERNAL SYSTEMS-- INDEED, IN SOME MEASURE, THE PHYSICAL FABRIC OF THE PLANETOID-- ARE LINKED WITH MAGNETO HIMSELF.

HE IS STRUCK AS HARD, PERHAPS EVEN AS FATALLY, AS HIS HOME.

A MASTERFUL STRATAGEM. IN ADDITION TO THE PLASMA BEAM, CORTEZ ATTEMPTED TO SIMULTANEOUSLY IGNITE THE NUCLEAR WARHEADS...

...OF THE MISSILES I HAD ARRAYED ABOUT MY ASTEROID AS A DEFENSIVE MEASURE

I HAVE MAGNETICALLY... DISABLED THE TRIGGERS THE WEAPONS ARE USELESS.

TIME T' GO, FOLKS

FAST AS WE CAN!

I'LL HELP JEAN!

ROGUE, TAKE THE PROFESSOR!

AND MAGNETO AS WELL, CYCLOPS!

YOU ARE THE STUBBORNEST OF MEN, CHARLES...

NOT TO MENTION ONE OF THE MOST FOOLISH!

I HAVE ENCLOSED THE ASTEROID WITH AN ENERGY SHIELD, TO DEFLECT ANY FURTHER ATTACKS.

IT TAKES MY TOTAL CONCENTRATION TO MAINTAIN THE INTERNAL PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY OF THIS COMPLEX.

—HERE I AM, HERE I WILL REMAIN

IF YOU WON'T SAVE YOURSELF, AT LEAST THINK OF YOUR FOLLOWERS.

THERE'S ROOM IN THE X-WING, COME WITH US, I BEG YOU!

NO

THEY HAVE MADE THEIR **FREE CHOICE**, CHARLES. SO HAVE I.

MY LIFE WAS SHAPED BY FORCES AND EVENTS NONE OF YOU CAN POSSIBLY UNDERSTAND.

YOU SPEAK TO THE **BEST** IN HUMANITY I HAVE ENDURED THE **WORST**

YOU **IMAGINE** THE REALITY OF THE **HOLOCAUST**, OF THE **NAZI DEATH CAMPS**. I GREW UP IN ONE

PERHAPS, AS YOU SAY, I **AM** TAINTED BY BLOOD AND RAGE-- AND DEATH.

BUT PERHAPS AS WELL, THAT BLOOD AND RAGE AND DEATH COMPRISE THE **ARMOR** THAT WILL **SUSTAIN** ME AND THOSE WHO STAND BY ME THROUGH THE ORDEAL TO COME

THE PAST IS PROLOGUE, OLD FRIEND. AND THE FUTURE I BEHOLD FOR YOU IS...

...**WAR.**

WE HAVE ALREADY **CHOSEN** OUR PATH

CHOSEN **WHAT--** A LEGACY TO OUR CHILDREN OF UN-ENDING CONFLICT?

ARE YOUR HEART AND SOUL SO **BLACK**?

PROFESSOR, WE GOTTA GO!

IT'S NO USE TALKIN'. AH SEE THAT NOW

Y'ALL MAY USE THE SAME WORDS, BUT YOU DON'T SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE. AH WONDER IF Y'EVER DID

LEAVE ME **BE**, ROGUE! I WON'T PERMIT THIS!

THAT DECISION, CHARLES, IS NOT YOURS TO MAKE

FARE-WELL, MY OLD FRIEND.

WHATEVER COMES I AND MINE WILL NOT GO LIKE LAMBS TO THE SLAUGHTER-- BUT LIKE **TIGERS.**

NO-- **MAGNETO--** THIS ISN'T THE ANSWER, IT ISN'T THE WAY--

WE'RE ABOARD, STORM! HATCH IS SEALED TIGHT!

GET US **OUTTA** HERE!

No!



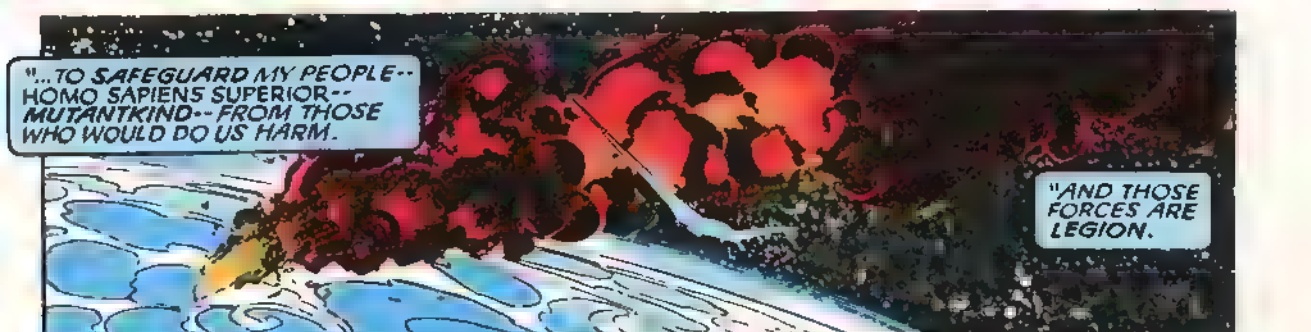
AT THE LAST...

... HE
OPENED HIS
THOUGHTS
TO ME.

HE IS STILL
THE MAN I
REMEMBER FROM
YOUNGER, HAPPIER
DAYS-- WHO WAS
MY FRIEND--
AND YET...

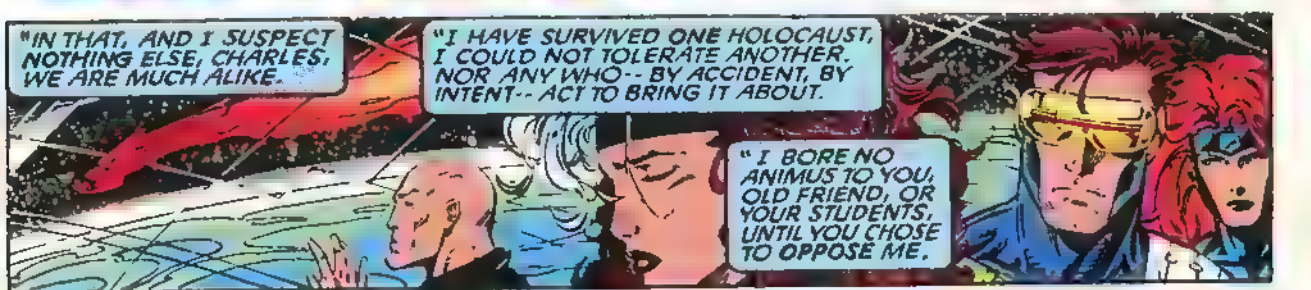
... NONE
OF THAT
MATTERS
ANYMORE,
DOES IT?

"I SAVE
YOU, X-MEN,"
HE SAID,
"BECAUSE
THAT IS MY
TASK IN
LIFE:



"...TO SAFEGUARD MY PEOPLE--
HOMO SAPIENS SUPERIOR--
MUTANTKIND-- FROM THOSE
WHO WOULD DO US HARM.

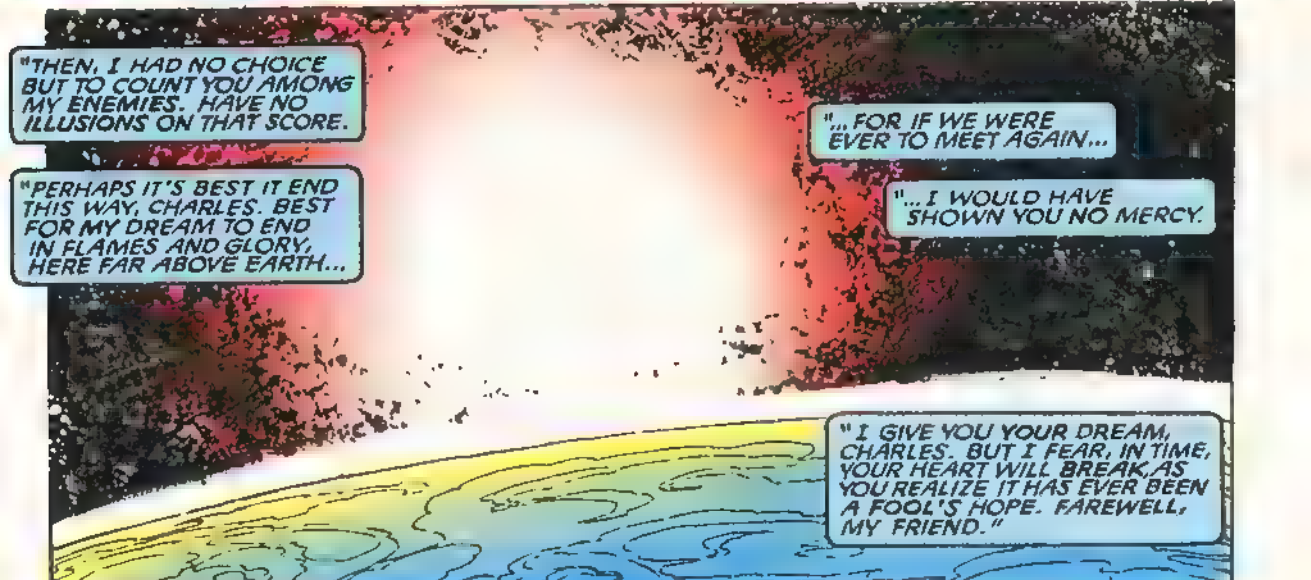
"AND THOSE
FORCES ARE
LEGION.



"IN THAT, AND I SUSPECT
NOTHING ELSE, CHARLES,
WE ARE MUCH ALIKE.

"I HAVE SURVIVED ONE HOLOCAUST,
I COULD NOT TOLERATE ANOTHER.
NOR ANY WHO-- BY ACCIDENT, BY
INTENT-- ACT TO BRING IT ABOUT.

"I BORE NO
ANIMUS TO YOU,
OLD FRIEND, OR
YOUR STUDENTS,
UNTIL YOU CHOSE
TO OPPOSE ME.



"THEN, I HAD NO CHOICE
BUT TO COUNT YOU AMONG
MY ENEMIES. HAVE NO
ILLUSIONS ON THAT SCORE.

"PERHAPS IT'S BEST IT END
THIS WAY, CHARLES. BEST
FOR MY DREAM TO END
IN FLAMES AND GLORY,
HERE FAR ABOVE EARTH...

"... FOR IF WE WERE
EVER TO MEET AGAIN...

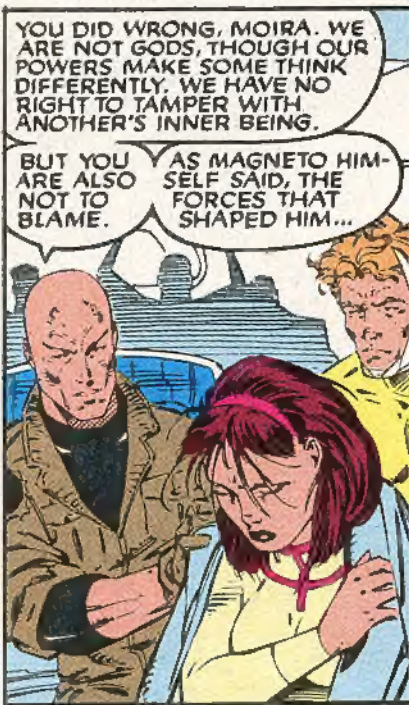
"... I WOULD HAVE
SHOWN YOU NO MERCY.

"I GIVE YOU YOUR DREAM,
CHARLES. BUT I FEAR, IN TIME,
YOUR HEART WILL BREAK, AS
YOU REALIZE IT HAS EVER BEEN
A FOOL'S HOPE. FAREWELL,
MY FRIEND."



GOTTA SAY THIS FOR THE MAN--

--HE KNOWS HOW TO MAKE AN EXIT.



YOU DID WRONG, MOIRA. WE ARE NOT GODS, THOUGH OUR POWERS MAKE SOME THINK DIFFERENTLY. WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO TAMPER WITH ANOTHER'S INNER BEING.

BUT YOU ARE ALSO NOT TO BLAME.

AS MAGNETO HIMSELF SAID, THE FORCES THAT SHAPED HIM...



...DID THEIR WORK LONG BEFORE THE X-MEN WERE EVEN BORN.

NOW PERHAPS THE TIME HAS COME TO DO SOME SHAPING OF OUR OWN.

TO ACT ON THE STAGE OF HISTORY.



LIKE MAGETO, WE HAVE MADE CHOICES IN OUR LIVES. WE HAVE TAKEN OUR STAND FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE IN. WE WERE BOTH HAUNTED MEN, HIM BY A NIGHTMARE, ME BY A DREAM.

TIME WILL TELL WHICH OF US WAS RIGHT.

HIS CHOICE WAS EVER FUELED BY RAGE, TAINTED BY THE DESPAIR THAT SCARS HIS SOUL.

AS OURS, I PRAY, WILL BE SUSTAINED BY HOPE.

WE HAVE IT WITHIN OURSELVES, X-MEN-- AS DO ALL PEOPLE, WHETHER MUTANTS OR NO-- TO LEAVE OUR WORLD BETTER THAN WE FOUND IT.

TO STRIVE FOR THE HEIGHTS OF OUR POTENTIAL, TO SEEK OUT THE BEST IN OURSELVES AND IN OTHERS, WHERE MAGNETO WOULD HAVE AUTOMATICALLY ASSUMED THE WORST.



YES, THAT IS AN IDEAL. PERHAPS AN UNATTAINABLE ONE. BUT SUCCESS IN THIS IS NOT WHAT IS IMPORTANT.

WHAT MATTERS IS THE ATTEMPT, AND OUR POWERS, OUR ROLE AS HEROES-- PERHAPS EVEN THE SIMPLE FACT THAT WE LIVE-- GIVES US THE OBLIGATION TO TRY.

CSC • 1976-1991 • FIN

NEXT: OMEGA RED!



STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

His name was Vincent Colletta, but everyone called him Vinnie. He started working for Marvel more than thirty years ago, before we were even known as Marvel. I believe we were called Atlas Publishing then. But the company name doesn't matter. What does matter is telling you what a great guy Vinnie was.

Hardly anyone except me knows this, because hardly anyone else was around at that time, but the first stories that Vinnie drew for us were romance strips. When I say "drew", I mean he did both the penciling and the inking, and he did them superbly. Now, I'm not talking ordinary, run-of-the-mill comic book romance strips. I'm talking about

some of the most breathtakingly beautiful pen-and-ink illustrations you've ever seen! Vinnie treated each and every panel as if it were intended for The Louvre. I used to tell him he was putting too much work into each strip, that it wasn't necessary to make everything so lyrical, so pleasing to the eye, so incredibly perfect. After all, we were just printing 10-cent comic books. (10 cents! That'll give you an idea how long ago it was!)

But Vinnie couldn't help himself. He was a born perfectionist. If a drawing wasn't to his liking, he'd do it over and over again until he was satisfied. In the most literal sense of the word, Vincent Colletta was a truly dedicated artist.

Years later, after the romance had run its course, Vinnie offered to put his skill to use by inking our other strips,

mainly super hero thrillers. For the next few decades, his speed, his dependability, his total professionalism, saved our deadlines and our schedules more times than I can ever tell.

The bullpen and I recently learned of Vinnie's passing. We'll always regret that we never had the chance to bid him goodbye. But I want to take this opportunity to offer our most heartfelt condolences to his wife and family. Vinnie Colletta was a uniquely talented, charismatic artist who was always there when we needed him and who never gave less than his best. He was a credit to our industry. He was my friend. I miss ya, VC. So do we all.

Excelsior!

Stan Lee

Try to remember, the kind of November ... oops, wrong month. Now we'll have to think up a new opening. Okay, so this is the month where we all chow down on turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, cranberry sauce, and giblets (what the heck are giblets, anyway?), eating more food in one day than we do the whole rest of the year. Then we give thanks that we only have to eat cranberry sauce once a year, and Mom puts the whole thing in the freezer for a month so we can eat the same dinner again at Christmas.

Here at Mighty Marvel, we have a lot to be thankful for this year. For starters, our head honcho (and head hipster) **Terry Stewart** initiated our first ever company picnic this past August. The picnic was a huge success, with plenty of food and drink for all, and fun and games galore (with fewer casualties than we would've expected). Among the activities were softball, football, and volleyball (Marveloids will play any sport that ends in the word "ball"), with the highlight of the day being an impromptu wet t-shirt contest! Everyone is looking forward to next year's picnic, especially Ant-Man, who said he plans on bring lots of friends next time!

The Marvel softball team also had a lot to be thankful for this year. (Actually, there were TWO Marvel softball teams this year — so many people wanted to play that it was necessary to form two teams: the Punishers and the Hellraisers. But then the two teams merged about halfway through the season.) Both teams had largely unimpressive track records, but the season ended on a high note with a victory over arch-rival, the DC Bullets. DC had won the first two games against Marvel this year, so it was a particularly satisfying victory for our side as we crushed them in a devastating 8-0 shut out.

Team captains this year were neo-hipster **Paul Becton**, and hipster-wanna-be **Evan Skolnick**. Noted the easily-bruisable Evan, "This was the first game of the season in which I did not bleed." MVP's for the final DC game were **Fabian Nicieza** (who thinks it's square to be hip), ex-hipster **Craig Kunaschk** of the direct sales department, who pounded out a three-run homer, and assistant editor **John Lewandowski**, who was a hipster when being a hipster wasn't considered hip.

After the game, assistant editor (and intercontinental-hipster) **Richard Ashford** and his lovely wife **Carol Baird** (who's so hip she's got a different last name from her husband)

NOVEMBER
COOLOMETER

- THE ADDAMS FAMILY
- BORIS YELTZEN
- SCORSESE/DENIRO MOVIES
- THE FANTASTIC FOUR
- COMEDY CENTRAL
- PETER BAGGE'S HATE
- ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS
- MIKHAIL GORBACHEV
- CAPTAIN AMERICA: LA PELICULA
- IMAGE SEMINARS
- THE DISCONTINUATION OF FOAM PACKAGING BY McDONALDS
- SPIDER-MAN BALLOON IN MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE
- THE LETTER "L"
- TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION
- AMANDA PAYS
- AWARDS SHOWS
- SEMIPERMEABLE MEMBRANES
- NUTRASWEET
- ABC SITCOMS, ESPECIALLY "WHO'S THE BOSS"
- THE OCTOBER COOLOMETER
- SELF-REFERENTIALISM
- NUISANCE SUITS
- MACAULEY CULKIN
- COMMUNISM
- THE NEW YORK SUBWAY SYSTEM

threw a party at their digs in New York's Upper West Side. Players from the Marvel and DC teams showed up, and a good time was had by all. Truly it can be said that everyone came away a winner on that day (of course, the Marvel team were the real winners, and the DC team went crying home to their mothers! So there!).

The kids of the St. Mary's recreational center in the South Bronx also have a lot to be thankful for this year — their building now sports a huge mural, filled with Marvel characters, painted by residents of the community. The mural was part of a project which takes kids off the streets and gives them a creative outlet. **Bob Budiansky**, who is a hipster from way back, helped the kids out on the project, ably assisted by demi-hipster (and everybody's sweetheart) **David Wohl**, whose return to staff was brutally ignored by this page several months back. Also assisting in this project was DEATHLOK artist and ultra-hipster **Denys Cowan**.

There are some thankful new fathers in the Marvel family these days — suspected hipster, GHOST RIDER writer **Howard Mackie** with his lovely wife **Deborah Highley**, just brought forth into this world a baby girl named **Alexandra**. Triple-threat SPIDER-MAN hipster **Todd McFarlane** and his fabulous wife **Wanda Kolomyjek** just joined forces to produce a baby girl named **Cyan**. And mega-hipster slash inker **Mark McKenna** and his vivacious wife **Kathy** produced their latest creative endeavor — a little bundle of joy named **Erin Marie**. All of these babies arrived on schedule, which means they have absolutely no future in this business!

One guy who is not too thankful this year is MARVEL AGE assistant editor **Mike Lackey**, who wouldn't know a hipster if one came up and bit him on the nose. Mike is famous for having the smallest desk at Marvel. Well, recently Mike moved downstairs to the ninth floor when MARVEL AGE received a new editor, cowgirl/hipster **Renée Witterstaetter**. With the move came an even smaller desk for Mike! At this rate, we may just take Mike's desk away, and he can put a board on his lap and use that! Look at the bright side, Mike — at least you're not sitting on milk crates!

Be here next month for more hyper-hip pronouncements and fooferah. You know what they say, "When the going gets hip, the hip get hopping!"

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